September 20, 1955

Dear Aleck and Helen:

I think you misunderstood my question about the F- tester. The behavior of W-2721 or the like was well covered in the report. But I thought you had mentioned (in the course of your three-way crossing tests, perhaps) that one of the reputed F- cultures in the K-12 series was showing some compatibility in combination with other F-, and this is what I wanted to straighten out, for fear that we might be using a misnamed F- in our own tests of compatibility. If this still sounds unfamiliar, then assume I have imagined your supposed remark.

Helen— we've looked all over the lab (first place checked was the miscellaneous rack) and could not find the 1069 A and B. Nor are they in lyophil. They may still have been tucked in some secluded corner, but just as likely they were inadvertently thrown out after you made your copies. If you still have them, in viable condition, could you just send back subcultures? I would also appreciate having whatever notes (i.e., the information) you may have on the details of these cultures— or are they recorded only as having come from Weed as B and B/Cu respectively?

The renovations here are still proposed, with constantly receding prospective starting dates; they are now promised for "about the end of October". It will be quite a problem while they're working; we'll probably clear out en bloc for a month or two and work in a borrowed lab in Bact.

There's not much scientifically new going on-- I've been spending almost all my time at deskwork, organizing notes and writing some old papers, long overdue (e,g. the opera on chains), and too little in the lab. The first Gal-transduction paper is finally in the mill, and the second is on the way. Lately, I've been concentrating on getting some complete diploid stocks, suitable for routine crossing procedures, that may help to distinguish between what genetic fraction gets into a zygote, and what comes out (since deleted chromosomes will still be viable when"covered" in a diploid). This has been extremely tiresome, but we finally have some Hfr/F- heterozygotes, and are in sight of the homozygous diploid stocks that we're ultimately after.

We have only one new person in the lab. now, a lad named Alan Richter who has gotten right down to work very satisfactorily. He has set up a chemostat and is running F+'s through it to check the possibility of their running into F-. So far the results are equivocal(as usual!)

Yours sincerely,

Joshua

Joshua Lederberg